

Register results

The following actions have been taken by Federal agencies. They all were summarized in CONSUMER REGISTER when proposed. Extent of consumer comment is reported when such information is available.

- **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)** is permitting car makers to begin complying immediately with the new bumper standards (that become effective Sept. 1, 1978). As a result of comments from car manufacturers, NHTSA decided that the industry should have the choice of complying with requirements of either the existing bumper standard or the new standard until 1978. This rule is expected to help car makers develop bumpers that are made of soft materials. Details—*Federal Register*: June 20, page 31163; March 4, 1976, page 9374. CONSUMER REGISTER: March 15, 1976.

- **Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC)** has issued new regulations that are intended to improve bus service to consumers. Original proposal included 24-hour toll-free telephone information service, baggage security and safeguards, safer and more comfortable bus stations, more notice of schedule changes, and special help and facilities for handicapped travelers. New regulations differ from proposal in some ways. For example, (1) toll-free 24-hour information service will not be required; (2) reservation systems will not be required; and (3) specific standards for making terminals accessible to handicapped travelers have been adopted. ICC considered benefits as well as costs before issuing the regulations because it says bus service is "the most affordable means of intercity for-hire transportation currently available to many persons." Regulations become effective Aug. 8. Details—*Federal Register*: June 8, page 29309; July 17, 1975, page 30134. CONSUMER REGISTER: Aug. 15, 1975.

- **Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)** has announced the ban of unstable metal refuse bins with a capacity of more than 0.764 cubic meters (one cubic yard). The ban came in response to a petition citing serious accidents resulting from bins toppling on children who were swinging on them. CPSC says refuse bins are unstable if they tip over when a downward force of 86.63 kilograms (191 lbs.) or a horizontal force of 31.75 kilograms (70 lbs.) is applied. Ban, which becomes effective June 13, 1978, prohibits the manufacture of unstable bins after that date and requires that bins in use at that time be modified to meet CPSC standards. Details—*Federal Register*: June 13, page 30296; Jan. 7, page 1484; CONSUMER REGISTER: Feb. 1; CONSUMER NEWS: Dec. 1, page one.

Glass

Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is permitting glass fabricators (manufacturers who use glass in products such as storm doors or sliding patio doors) more time to comply with CPSC's glass safety standards.

Because glass manufacturers are not required to begin producing conforming glass before July 6, the effective date of the safety standard, CPSC decided that fabricators, retailers and distributors should be able to use nonconforming glass until July 5, 1978. This time extension would assure a supply of some kind of glass to consumers and help fabricators and sellers dispose of their inventories of nonconforming glass. It should be noted that even this glass will have to conform to a voluntary glazing standard.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 20, page 31164; Jan. 6, page 1428. CONSUMER REGISTER: March 1, 1976.

Canned peas

Aug. 8 is deadline for comments on **Food and Drug Administration's (FDA)** proposal to amend quality standards for canned peas. Proposal sets standards for terminology, basic ingredients and additives, defines categories of defective peas and limits total defects to 12% by weight of drained peas.

Proposal also requires accurate labeling of ingredients and specifies common names which may be used to describe various types of peas.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 7, page 29014. Send comments to Hearing Clerk Food and Drug Administration, Rockville, MD 20857. Comments should be marked with docket number 75P-0322. For further information contact Prince G. Harrill, Food and Drug Administration, 200 C St., SW, Washington, DC 20204; telephone 202-245-1164.

Yogurt and other dairy products

Sept. 8 is deadline for comments on **Food and Drug Administration's (FDA)** proposal to establish standards of identity for certain dairy products with common names—such as "yogurt" and "lowfat yogurt"—but which vary in composition. The dairy products that would have identity standards are cultured buttermilk, acidified buttermilk, yogurt, lowfat yogurt, nonfat yogurt, acidified milk, acidified lowfat milk and eggnog.

In the case of yogurt, for example, FDA wants consumers to know if the product has been heat-treated to destroy microorganisms that shorten the shelf life of yogurt. FDA therefore proposes that such yogurt be labeled "heat-treated after culturing" to differentiate it from the traditional yogurt which contains live microorganisms.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 10, page 29919. Send comments to Hearing Clerk, Food and Drug Administration, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20857. For further information write or call Eugene T. McGarahan, 200 C St., SW, Washington, DC 20204; telephone 202-245-1155.

Eyeglasses

Aug. 12 is new deadline for comments on **Federal Trade Commission's (FTC)** proposal to protect advertisers of ophthalmic goods and service. FTC's staff report on the proposed trade regulation rule is now available, but it has not been reviewed or adopted by FTC. FTC will continue to accept comments on the original proposal, as well as on the staff report and the Presiding Officer's report—which has already been made public [CONSUMER REGISTER: Feb. 15].

Details—*Federal Register*: June 10, page 29917; Jan. 27, page 5075. CONSUMER REGISTER: Feb. 15, 1976. Send comments to Secretary, Federal Trade Commission, Washington, DC 20580. For a copy of the report, write to Public Reference Branch at above address.

Noisy appliances—and hearing protectors

Sept. 20 is deadline for comments on **Environmental Protection Agency's** (EPA) proposals to require labels on certain products such as appliances and on hearing protectors that tell prospective buyers how noisy—or quiet—those products are. Individual products are not identified at this time; EPA will propose regulations on specific products at a later date.

These proposals implement a section of the Noise Control Act of 1972 which says EPA must prepare labeling requirements for "products which emit noise capable of adversely affecting the public health or welfare" as well as for "products which are sold wholly or in part on the basis of their effectiveness in reducing noise." An example of a noise reducer is acoustical tile. An example of a hearing protector is a head set that is worn by employees who work around airports.

EPA wants consumers to have accurate and understandable information on products they buy—with a minimum of Federal control. Therefore, the agency is particularly interested in hearing from consumers and consumer groups about any aspect of the proposed noise standards. Public hearings will be held if comments indicate the need for them.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 22, pages 31722 and 31730. Send comments to Director, Standards and Regulations Division, Office of Noise Abatement and Control (AW-471), Environmental Protection Agency, Washington, DC 20460 (Docket number 77-5). For more information write or call Ted Ricci at above address; telephone 703-557-2710.

Bumpers

Aug. 15 is deadline for comments on **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's** (NHTSA) proposed alternatives to its automobile bumper standards that include establishing a consumer information program.

One alternative would require car manufacturers to provide consumers with information on estimated bumper damage and costs of repair for such damage based on data derived from low speed impact tests. Purpose is to let consumers assess and compare the crashworthiness of bumpers in shopping for cars.

Under the proposed rules manufacturers would have to put labels on each new car window stating that (1) either the vehicle meets standards for bumper damage and that "inconsequential" damage resulted when the vehicle was subjected to an impact test at a speed of 8 kilometers (5 miles) per hour or that (2) the vehicle does not meet these standards. On labels for vehicles not meeting the bumper standard, costs for repair or replacement (including labor costs) must be clearly stated. Label must also say that the dealer has a free booklet for consumers that lists bumper damage data for all cars.

The labeling program would take effect Sept. 1, 1978 under the proposed rule.

Another section of the information program would require car insurers to furnish NHTSA with information on insurance rate discounts provided for various levels of bumper performance beginning Sept. 1, 1979. NHTSA would compile and distribute these data to car makers. They in turn would be required to publish booklets with this information and supply them to dealers for distribution to consumers. Potential car

buyers would then know which car models would enable them to get reduced insurance rates.

The information program is intended to expand or replace current plans to impose a strict phase of mandatory bumper standards currently scheduled to take effect Sept. 1, 1979.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 16, page 30655. **CONSUMER REGISTER**: June 15; March 15, 1976; Feb. 1 and Feb. 15, 1975. Send comments marked with docket number 73-19, 74-11 to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Room 5108, 400 7th St., SW, Washington, DC 20590. NHTSA says that although the official cutoff date for comments is Aug. 15, it will consider comments received after that date for as long as possible. NHTSA will file all material received and late comments not considered will be retained and treated as suggestions for future rulemaking. For further information contact Bob Mewhinney at the above address; telephone 202-755-8896.

Energy efficiency: Appliances

Aug. 1 is deadline for comments on **Federal Energy Administration's** (FEA) proposed test procedures for evaluating the energy efficiency of central air conditioners as required by the Energy Policy and Conservation Act. Ultimate purpose of this testing is to provide useful information on estimated annual operating costs and energy consumption to help consumers with purchasing decisions.

The Act provides that in determining operating costs, energy use will be measured in terms of an "average-use cycle" that reflects annual costs. FEA has determined, based on a report by the **National Bureau of Standards** (NBS), that the average-use cycle for central air conditioners is 1,000 hours per year.

FEA also intends to compute information on energy consumption regionally by taking into account estimated "cooling load hours" in different parts of the US.

While the proposed formulas for determining energy consumption are complex and detailed, this notice is included in **CONSUMER REGISTER** because the product information eventually produced by this testing will be directly beneficial to consumers.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 14, page 30401. Send comments marked "Central Air Conditioner Proposed Test Procedures" to Executive Communications, Room 3317, Federal Energy Administration, Washington, DC 20461.

Aug. 8 is deadline for comments on similar FEA proposals for regulations covering test procedures for conventional kitchen ranges and microwave ovens. Proposed regulations establish average-use cycle of one year for assessment of operating and energy costs and set sampling and test methods and standards. FEA is particularly interested in receiving comments on useful measures of energy consumption or data on typical consumer usage of these appliances.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 16, page 30627. Send comments marked "Conventional Ranges and Cooking Tops" to Executive Communications, 3317, Federal Energy Administration, Box NE, Washington, DC 20461.

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For you

These forms are for you to use, if you wish, in commenting on any Federal Agency proposal summarized in CONSUMER REGISTER. Of course, if you cannot get your comments on the front and back of a form, feel free to continue your comments on additional paper.

Send comment forms to addresses listed in the summaries.

CONSUMER NEWS is publishing these forms in cooperation with **Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**.

Rate Register

Planes

- Eastern Airlines has agreed to make more space available for nonsmokers and pay \$10,000 settlement charges for violating Federal rules. Agreement reached with **Civil Aeronautics Board's (CAB)** Enforcement Bureau must be approved by its 5-member board. Eastern also agreed to reserve at least two-thirds of its seats on its shuttle between New York and Washington for nonsmokers and 65% on most other planes. Agreement was hailed as a victory for consumer groups as setting standards for future airline-industry agreements.

- As predicted [RATE REGISTER: June 15], President Carter approved Laker Airways' request to offer low-rate New York-London "Skytrain" air service, to begin Sept. 29 with no reserved seats and ticket sales starting 6 hours before takeoff. Fares are \$135 from New York to London and \$101 from London to New York (difference due to currency conversions). Payment must be cash—no credit arrangements whatsoever are permitted. When buying a ticket, passenger may order meal from limited menu—hot or cold—and pay for the meal at that time—or he/she can take sandwiches along. Before signing the approval, the President had said he is in favor of airline competition. License to operate the service will be withdrawn if the British government prevents any US carrier from operating a similar service to London. In the meantime, Nationwide Leisure Corp, a charter airline, is asking **Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB)** for

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Clip this form, fill in blanks, write your comments & mail to agency noted in CONSUMER REGISTER item.

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Rate Register

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permission to offer no-reservation seats on North Atlantic flights that would cost \$18 less than the Laker fares. Nationwide proposes to sell round trip tickets and to serve meals. Trans World Airlines has indicated it may block off space in rear of planes to make low cost seats available—and Pan Am is expected to offer similar arrangements.

• **Civil Aeronautics Board** (CAB) has suspended and will investigate the .7% domestic fare increases proposed by most US airlines. They were to go into effect on various dates beginning June 22.

• July 25 is deadline for comments on **Civil Aeronautics Board's** (CAB) advance notice of proposed rulemaking on price advertising of air transportation, especially charters. CAB said that issues involved are of importance to the traveling public because they affect passengers' knowledge of what is included and what a proposed trip would cost under alternatives. CAB would like to hear from consumers and others if there is confusion as to the real price of air transportation and if they have trouble in comparing competitive methods of travel. CAB would like to know the practical effect of preventing or allowing price advertising to be broken down by component parts rather than stated solely as total price. In addition, it asks for evidence to support the contention that the "total tour price" one-component rule has been a source of public confusion or whether the requirement of "clear disclosure" of total price is sufficient to protect the public.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 14, page 30376. Send comments to Docket 30667, Docket Section, Civil Aeronautics Board, Washington, DC 20428. For further information call or write Simon J. Eilenburg at above address; telephone 202-673-5442.

Mail

• Cost of mailing magazines, books, records and other second class mail items will go up July 6. Letters and other classes of mail are not affected by the increase, a part of a series of **Postal Service** (PS) steps aimed at bringing materials which receive preferential rates up to full rates. The steps take place annually. Cost of mailing a book or record will increase from 25¢ to 30¢ for the first pound and from 10¢ to 11¢ for each additional pound up to 7 pounds and each pound over that will cost 8¢. Typical weekly news magazine will cost 6.8¢, up from 5.6¢. For libraries, the book and record rates go from 9¢ to 11¢ for the first pound, each extra pound remaining at 4¢. Cost of bulk mailing a third class circular for nonprofit organizations will increase from 2¢ to 2.1¢.

